

# 16—Plan Implementation

## Introduction

This *C3 Vision Plan* is a vision plan and a policy document that will guide decision-making within the city. While it contains many long-term and seemingly far-reaching goals and ideals, it also needs to be achievable. This chapter explains how Commerce City will begin to implement this Plan, once adopted, through:

1. Specific Actions, identified in a Priority Action Plan,
2. A Monitoring Program, measuring progress towards achievement of plan goals (i.e., the *Community Score Card*), and
3. Plan Amendments and Updates, described as five-year updates and a clear process for more frequent changes.



This chapter addresses actions, amendments, and monitoring to carry out this Plan and reach its high aiming goals.

## Actions

### Necessary Types of Actions

Commerce City will implement this Plan using several different approaches, as briefly described below, including:

- Policy Decisions;
- Land Development Code Amendments;
- Partnerships and Intergovernmental Agreements;
- Programs; and
- Infrastructure Assessment/Improvements.

### Policy Decisions

The city will carry out most of the policies in this Plan during day-to-day decisions—those made by the Planning Commission and City Council, and sometimes planning staff. These groups will continually make decisions regarding development proposals and *C3 Vision Plan* amendments, using the Future Land Use Plan and plan policies to guide decisions will ensure consistency. Two examples of meeting the intent of this Plan's policies would be restricting rezoning of industrial lands for residential uses, unless consistent with the Future Land Use Plan, or phasing development at the eastern edge of the city to avoid leapfrog development.



Land Development Code (LDC) amendments will be necessary to implement this Plan, including standards to allow and encourage regional commercial, as shown above.

### Land Development Code Amendments

While Commerce City just undertook a major code overhaul, the city will need to make several development regulations consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan. The city will review its Land Development Code (LDC), including zoning, development standards, and subdivision regulations, for consistency with this Plan. The strategies within plan elements address particular aspects of the LDC that will need to be updated including but not limited to:

- updating certain residential, industrial/employment, and commercial zoning districts and standards to be consistent with the land use categories in Chapter 3;
- amending dimensional standards for infill areas;
- coordinating rezonings to make zoning consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (e.g., Tiffany and Industrial Enclave area);
- adding new design standards for commercial centers; and
- updating the LDC with contemporary sustainable development, approaches, for example allowing solar panels and small agriculture.



The city will develop new programs and facilities, based on needs and available resources.

### Partnerships and Intergovernmental Agreements

A number of this Plan’s recommendations will best be achieved through cooperation and partnerships and (more formally) Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) between the city and other governmental entities, such as Adams County, the Regional Transportation District (RTD), South Adams County Water and Sanitation District, or other special districts. The city already has various IGAs in place, some of which may require amendments to remain current.

### Programs

This Plan establishes a foundation for new or ongoing programs, which are a major way to accomplish many of the goals of this Plan. For example, some policies recommend participating in planning efforts, such as planning for FasTracks, enforcement of infill/phased growth, enforcement of future growth and relationship to infrastructure, continued neighborhood planning, volunteer stewardship programs to maintain open space and parks, and others addressed in the strategies. Programs have varying levels of priority, depending on the issues involved and available resources. Consequently, the city will initiate them at different times.



Programs, such as neighborhood planning or planning for FasTracks, will also be important to implement this Plan.

### Infrastructure Assessment/Improvements

In some cases, the Plan will require that the city take a proactive role to assess current and future needs and plan for expansion and improvement to services and facilities, such as a police substation or recreation center development. Commerce City will need to

coordinate with districts on other infrastructure needs, including schools, water/sewer, and energy/electricity, to more closely align with the goals of efficiently providing services and for development to pay its way.

## The Priority Action Plan

### Priority Action Plan Priorities

The Action Plan identifies the highest priority strategies from the previous chapters. It also identifies responsible parties or city departments and timing upon adoption of this Plan.

### *How the Highest Priority Strategies Have Been Selected*

Generally the action plan carries forward several of the top strategies from each chapter to achieve a balance in meeting this Plan's objectives, with strategies selected based on input from advisory committees, staff, elected and appointed officials, and the following criteria. The strategies in the table:

- Have the greatest effect in implementing the goals of a particular chapter and multiple other chapters of this Plan (e.g., they will accomplish "a lot of bang for the buck" and will encompass various disciplines.);
- Are the most efficient to implement—based on the city's available resources and staff;
- Will leverage city revenues and funds; and
- Are most important to begin immediately or within four to six years of plan adoption, to avoid missing the opportunity to achieve Plan goals.

The table does not include many of the important ongoing strategies (e.g., consistency with the Future Land Use Plan or partnerships), to avoid creating an especially lengthy list. (See Chapters 4 through 15 for additional strategies.)

### Priority Action Plan as Guide to Work Plan

After adoption of this Plan, the city will continue its work on specific actions to carry out this Plan's goals and policies. The Priority Action Plan will help guide the city's work plan, by using this table as a preliminary annual work program. The city's departments will need to administratively update the work plan on a periodic basis—every one to two years. Once the actions listed in this Priority Action Plan are complete, some of the additional strategies listed within the plan chapters can be brought forward—until all are complete.

## Timing of Actions

The table below includes the highest priority strategies. The city will begin them:

- **Within one to three years;** or
- **Within four to six years.**

Certain actions will also be ongoing after the city initiates them.

**Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan**

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-3 Years	4-6 Years	Ongoing
 <b>Chapter 4: Land Use and Growth</b>					
LU 1a / 1b	<b>Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments / Plan Guides Development</b> Update the LDC and zone districts to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) and categories in Chapter 3. Use the FLUP to guide development patterns and mix of uses.	Planning Division	■		✓
LU 2a	<b>Infill Incentives</b> Provide incentives for infill development and redevelopment (e.g., streamlined review process, rebated or reduced fees, or relaxed standards to allow for infill).	Community Development Department/ Economic Development	■		
LU 2c	<b>Annexation Criteria</b> Develop annexation criteria for Adams County enclaves. Different criteria may be needed for Historic City, Irondale, Northern Range, and E-470.	Planning Division	■		
LU 2f / 1c	<b>Tiered Growth / Jobs-to-Housing Ratio</b> Adopt a Tiered Planning System and phasing criteria, as suggested in Policy 2.2. Monitor jobs-to-housing goals in new growth areas.	Planning Division	■		✓
LU 3b	<b>Neighborhood and Sub-area Plans</b> Develop neighborhood plans for residential or mixed-use areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., Adams City/FasTracks station site and Wembley).	Planning Division	■		
 <b>Chapter 5: Economic Development</b>					
ED 1a	<b>Economic Development Strategic Plan</b> Implement strategies of the <i>Economic Development Strategic Plan</i> .	Economic Development	■		✓
ED 2a	<b>Higher Education/Workforce Training</b> Develop a strategy to attract and enhance opportunities for higher education and post-secondary educational training programs.	Economic Development/ Community Development		■	
 <b>Chapter 6: Fiscal Stability</b>					
FS 1b	<b>Prioritize Needs</b> Prioritize needs in Capital Improvement Program (aligning with this Plan).	City Manager/ Finance/ Public Works - Engineering	■		✓
FS 1c	<b>Pursue Grants</b> Leverage city resources to utilize state and federal funding sources, and grants (including sustainability-related and healthy communities funding).	City Manager			✓
 <b>Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhoods</b>					
HN 1d	<b>Proactive Property Maintenance</b> Explore ways to make code enforcement more proactive to ensure property maintenance and prevent further zoning and municipal code violations.	Building Division / Neighborhood Services	■		✓

**Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan**

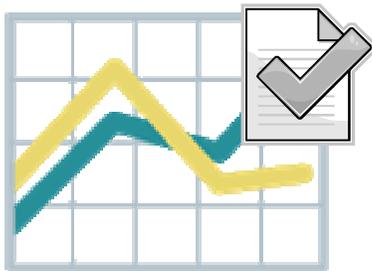
No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-3 Years	4-6 Years	Ongoing
HN 2c	<b>Foreclosure Prevention Programs</b> Work with all housing agencies to ensure that Commerce City residents are aware of and have access to the foreclosure prevention and assistance programs administered by Adams County.	Housing Division			✓
HN 2b	<b>Household Energy Conservation Funding</b> Explore options to assist households with reducing household energy costs (costs associated with energy consumption, transportation, and utilities).	Housing Division		■	
HN 2d	<b>Senior Housing</b> Pursue federal programs to build senior housing, including affordable housing with supportive services and senior housing for all income levels. Revise the LDC to allow senior housing in districts consistent with Chapter 4.	Housing Division/ Planning Division	■		
 <b>Chapter 8: Redevelopment and Reinvestment</b>					
RR 2a	<b>Urban Renewal Area (URA) Tools</b> Expand application of Urban Renewal Areas (URAs) tools (including financing) to achieve redevelopment goals, including existing URAs (Prairie Gateway, Derby, and US 85), and potential new URAs (e.g. FasTracks area).	Finance/ Planning Division/ Economic Development	■		✓
RR 2b	<b>Quasi-Public Urban Renewal Entity</b> Explore feasibility of a non-profit, quasi-public entity to oversee infill and redevelopment in neighborhoods that could purchase and rehabilitate structures, or consolidate and sell properties.	Finance/ Planning Division/ Economic Development		■	
RR 2c	<b>FasTracks Station Sub-Area Plan</b> Develop FasTracks station sub-area plan. Modify zoning to achieve an appropriate mix of uses (especially for the T.O.D. site), using a blend of regulations, guidelines, and incentives.	Planning Division/ Engineering Division	■		
RR 3a	<b>Funding and Grants for Redevelopment/Brownfields</b> Explore grants, low-interest loans, and redevelopment corporations to address redevelopment goals and to reduce industrial/residential conflicts.	City Manager/ Planning Division/ Economic Development	■		✓
 <b>Chapter 9: Transportation</b>					
T 1a	<b>Road Network Planning</b> Implement improvements to the roadway network based on the 5-year CIP with priorities as determined by the Transportation Plan.	Engineering Division/ Planning Division	■		✓
T 1b	<b>Transportation Fees</b> Determine potential new sources of funding for transportation improvements (e.g., road impact fees, street fees)	Engineering Division		■	
T 3c	<b>Prioritize Pedestrian Improvements</b> Coordinate high priority pedestrian improvement areas with the Capital Improvements Plan in the Transportation Plan. Create a visually-appealing and safe pedestrian experience in prioritized areas.	Engineering Division/ Planning Division	■		

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-3 Years	4-6 Years	Ongoing
T 4e	<b>Bus Transit Corridors / Access</b> Include provision for bus transit priority features along congested transit corridors.	Engineering Division	■		
 <b>Chapter 10: Safety and Wellness</b>					
SW 1a	<b>Police Strategic Plan Guides</b> Use <i>Police Strategic Plan</i> to address needs and response times.	Police Department			✓
SW 1b	<b>Shared Public Safety Facilities</b> Explore sharing facilities/sub-stations to serve citizens (e.g., East 103 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue /Walden Fire Station, East 60 <sup>th</sup> Avenue/Monaco Street, and East 112 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chambers Road).	Police Department with Fire Districts		■	
SW 2a	<b>Pedestrian Improvements</b> <i>See T 3c, above.</i>	Engineering Division/ Planning Division	■		
SW 2d	<b>Transit Access</b> Adopt practices to locate new and redeveloped housing in areas with access to transit. Work to relocate existing bus routes to maximize ridership and access.	Engineering Division / Planning Division		■	
 <b>Chapter 11: Parks, Open Space and Recreation</b>					
P 1a	<b>Prioritize Recommendations</b> Prioritize implementation recommendations of the <i>Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities</i> (2007) including new park development, facilities, and recreation.	Parks and Recreation	■		
P 4a	<b>Boost Volunteer Programs</b> Boost volunteer programs focusing on land restoration and stewardship.	Parks and Recreation		■	
 <b>Chapter 12: Public Facilities and Infrastructure</b>					
PF 1a	<b>Annual Capital Improvements Plan</b> Annually update the Capital Improvements Plan, considering priorities set forth in this plan and the annual Action Plan.	Finance (with input from other departments)	■		✓
PF 1d	<b>Coordinate with Other Districts</b> Coordinate with other districts to ensure adequate schools, power, and other infrastructure can be provided at the time of new development.	Engineering Division/ Planning Division	■		✓
PF 3b	<b>Task Force/Committees Creation</b> Explore creation of task forces and advisory committees to help further the aims of local government and this Plan.	City Manager's Office		■	
 <b>Chapter 13: Appearance and Design</b>					
AD 1a	<b>Prioritize Gateways and Corridors</b> Identify gateway and corridor priority areas—south and north city areas.	Planning Division/ Engineering Division	■		

**Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan**

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-3 Years	4-6 Years	Ongoing
AD 1b	<b>Overlay Districts – Gateways and Corridors</b> Develop overlay districts for gateways and corridors (e.g., E-470, Highway 2) to address corridor improvements, design and appearance, and future development.	Planning Division/ Engineering Division		■	
AD 2a	<b>Small Grant Funding</b> Evaluate and potentially provide small grant funding for enhancements in commercial districts, small neighborhood improvement projects, and way-finding signage.	City Manager/ Planning Division	■		✓
 <b>Chapter 14: Cultural Facilities and Tourism</b>					
CF 1a	<b>Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan</b> Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan that identifies potential funding sources to increase awareness regarding the city’s assets, arts and culture, and tourism.	City Manager’s Office/ Planning Division		■	
CF 2a	<b>Prioritize Historic Resources</b> Evaluate and prioritize historic resources.	Planning Division		■	
 <b>Chapter 15: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship</b>					
EC 1a	<b>Sustainability Plan/Climate Action Plan</b> Pursue funding; develop a Sustainability Plan and/or Climate Action Plan (with incentives, targets for reduction, strategies, and regulations).	City Manager’s Office/ Planning Division	■		
EC 1b	<b>Municipal Code Audit/Amendments</b> Perform an audit of the Municipal Code, including LDC and Engineering Standards, to determine barriers to sustainability; amend accordingly.	City Manager’s Office/ Planning Division		■	✓
EC 1c	<b>Prioritize Indicators – Score Cards</b> Prioritize and adapt indicators for a <i>Community Score Card</i> and <i>Project Review Score Card</i> and begin monitoring program.	Planning Division	■		✓
EC 6a	<b>Tree Preservation Standards</b> Expand tree preservation standards that exist in LDC.	Planning Division / Parks and Recreation		■	
EC 7a	<b>Buffer Residential Uses</b> Require buffers between industrial and residential between residential and the airport; and between housing and high traffic roadways.	Planning Division			✓



A *Community Score Card* will be a system of monitoring ongoing trends. It will enable the city to assess progress towards achieving the goals of this Plan, provide justification for amending the plan periodically as-needed, and assess the need for course corrections and changes in implementation measures.

## Plan Monitoring

Hundreds of people collaborated to produce this *C3 Vision Plan* for more than a year. The result is a consensus statement of Commerce City's vision, core values, goals, policies, and needed actions. This Plan represents a comprehensive summary of where the city is today, where it wants to be tomorrow, and what the community and city need to do to get there.

But how will the city track its progress? Throughout this Plan, the goals and policies lead the city toward making changes in its current policies—looking out 20 years and beyond. Many of the actions discussed in this Plan may take years to develop, fund, and implement. Some short-term impacts are likely to be subtle. Some will be more noticeable. Over time, however, smart decisions and the cumulative effects of city and community actions will result in achieving the future that this Plan envisions.

A system of regular monitoring and evaluation of ongoing trends will enable decision makers and the public to assess the city's progress towards achieving the goals of this Plan, provide justification for amending the Plan periodically as-needed, and assess the need for course corrections and changes in implementation measures. This monitoring approach will help ensure that the city is moving along the path that this Plan recommends, and will provide needed information to adjust to changing needs and conditions within an informed framework.

## The C3 Vision Plan Monitoring Program

Performance indicators can become the basis for developing a *Community Score Card* process to monitor Commerce City trends and determine how well the community is achieving its goals. They can also become the basis for a *Project Review Score Card* to assess how well a specific proposed development project fits the intent of this Plan.

### Performance Indicators

A Performance Indicator is an index used to monitor or measure community progress against goals. For example, the measure of parkland acreage per 1,000 residents is a common indicator of whether the community is meeting its parkland goal. In establishing a performance indicator, a primary prerequisite is that it must be based on data that is available, consistent, and reliable. A broad range of suggested indicators are included in each of the 12 elements of the *C3 Vision Plan* (Chapters 4 through 15). These are intended to serve as a basis for discussion about indicators that the city can use in establishing a Monitoring Program. The city will need to further refine and prioritize them, as indicators are selected and the program is established (see sidebar on *Criteria for Selecting Performance Indicators*).

### Establishing a Baseline

A first step in the Monitoring Program is to establish a baseline of information against which the city can measure trends over time. For example, if the indicator above for measuring acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is to be used to track progress, the city must first establish a baseline of reliable information on how many acres of parkland exists today. The availability of baseline information, as well as the ability to obtain trend information over time, should be important criteria in selecting the performance indicators to be used.

### Setting Targets

A Target is a defined standard by which something can be measured or judged, relating to the goals in this Plan. For example, using the indicator above for measuring acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, the city has already established a target (of 6 acres/1,000 people) for a specified amount of parkland. In general, this Plan does not recommend specific targets but instead includes relative targets (e.g., to maintain, increase or decrease a certain indicator). Over time, the city may choose to adopt specific targets as the monitoring process evolves, or as part of a Community Sustainability Plan developed subsequent to the Comprehensive Plan.

### *Criteria for Selecting Performance Indicators*

For the Plan Monitoring Program to be successful, it must be based on a set of performance indicators that will serve the city over the long-term. This Plan recommends that the program start with one or two indicators for each of the twelve plan element topics, in order to keep initial efforts manageable. The following criteria should be used when evaluating and selecting the indicators to be included:

1. **Policy Relevance** – is the indicator directly linked to one or several key issues around which key policies are formulated? Unless linked to critical decisions and policies, it is unlikely to motivate action.
2. **Simplicity** – can the information be presented in an easily understandable, yet appealing, way that the public can readily understand?
3. **Validity** – is the indicator a true reflection of conditions in the city, and is the data verifiable? Can the city affect the outcome? The data must be credible and reliable for both experts and laypeople.
4. **Time Series** – is time series data available, reflecting a trend of the indicator over time? This is important if the indicator is to reflect trends over time.
5. **Availability and Affordability** – is good quality data available at a reasonable cost, or is it likely to become so in the future? Costs can include both actual dollar expenditures as well as staff time.
6. **Serve Multiple Objectives** – is the indicator about a very narrow or broader issue? The list of potential indicators is endless. For this reason, indicators that reflect or aggregate information on broader topics should be preferred.

## Reporting Progress – Community Score Card Report

This Plan recommends that the city issue a *Community Score Card* Monitoring Report periodically to report on progress made towards achieving the city's goals. While information on some indicators would likely be collected annually, others may only be available on a less frequent basis. Therefore, the city should issue a report every year, documenting areas showing positive progress and recommending changes in areas in need of continued work.

To provide a comprehensive, inclusive snapshot of the city's progress, it is important that the monitoring program include indicators for each of the 12 Plan Elements. It is equally important that the monitoring program be manageable, succinct, and useful; thus indicators should be limited in number for each element. This Plan recommends that the monitoring program initially be limited to one or two indicators for each of the elements. Over time, as the program gets underway and is established, the city can add more indicators if needed to track additional aspects of the city's progress.

## Plan Amendments and Updates

This plan is meant to be a living document. For this Plan to function over time, the city must be able to periodically review it and make amendments to respond to trends or changes in the economic, physical, social, or political conditions of the city or region. The city will conduct revisions to this Plan according to two distinct and different procedures:

- (1) Five-Year Plan Update, and
- (2) Plan Amendments.

## Five-Year Plan Update Process

The purpose of a Plan Update is to re-evaluate the goals, policies, and strategies contained within this Plan (noting those to change and those to remove), and to develop new policies if necessary—to make sure that this Plan is effective. Plan updates should occur at intervals of approximately every five to seven years, unless otherwise directed by the City Council or Planning Commission.

The city's prime consideration in determining when an update should be initiated should include assessing changes that have occurred since the Plan was last updated. These changes may be in areas such as the economy, the environment, housing affordability, traffic congestion, local priorities, projected growth, or others. A Plan Update will include a thorough re-evaluation of the vision, goals, and policies contained within this Plan. A Plan Update will also include a thorough review of the validity of all

information contained within the Plan, and it should include extensive opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, city staff, and other affected interests.

### Plan Amendment Process

The city will follow a separate process for Plan Amendments—to be performed on a periodic basis (up to three times a year). Plan Amendments may include periodic substantive revisions to one or more sections of this Plan. Amendments may be necessary as a result of adoption of a sub-area plan or a specific issue/policy plan, because of monitoring (addressed in previous section) and course correction, or by directive from City Council at any time. Substantive amendment may also occur upon request by a landowner and reviewed as part of the periodic amendment schedule.

Plan Amendments may also involve minor changes to the *Future Land Use Plan* map or text to correct errors, which may occur administratively. Minor administrative plan amendments apply to properties that are less than 8-acres in size, including small minor changes to the map.

The process for making the substantive amendments is described below.

- All Plan Amendments shall be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Based on its consideration of the recommendations from staff, Planning Commission, and evidence from public hearings, the City Council could then adopt the Plan Amendment (with or without further revisions), or reject it.

### Criteria for Plan Amendments

When considering a plan amendment (other than minor correction), the city shall consider the following criteria and make a finding that the amendment meets the following:

1. It is consistent with the overall intent of the Comprehensive Plan;
2. The existing Plan and/or any related element thereof is in need of the proposed amendment;
3. It is necessary or desirable because of changing social values, new planning concepts, or other social or economic conditions and strict adherence to this Plan will result in a situation neither intended nor in keeping with other key elements and policies of this Plan;

4. The proposed amendment will not have a negative effect on the immediate areas or on transportation, services, and facilities;
5. The proposed amendment will have minimal effect on service provision, including adequacy or availability of urban facilities and services, and is compatible with existing and planned service provision and future development of the area;
6. The proposed amendment, if for an area that is outside of the city's current municipal boundaries, is consistent with the city's ability to annex the property; and
7. The proposed Plan amendment will promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the city and will be consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan and the elements thereof.